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LT. GOV. LANDRIEU ANNOUNCES GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHERS, SCHOOLS & NON-PROFITS

Louisiana Serve Commission offers \$200,000 in Service-Learning Grants

Baton Rouge, La. – Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu and the Louisiana Serve Commission are pleased to announce the release the 2009-10 Learn and Serve America grant application representing \$200,000 in service-learning grants this year. The program provides up to \$5,000 per year for new programs, and up to \$12,000 for established programs for the 2009-2010 school year. Grants up to \$50,000 are available to school districts and public-private non-profit partnerships.

"As we work to improve education for our kids, Learn and Serve grants provide a great resource for our public school teachers and schools," Lt. Governor Landrieu said. "Research shows that when students participate in these innovative programs, their academic performance improves and they develop a sense of civic engagement."

Learn and Serve America provides funds for experiential learning connected to community service projects to be implemented in K-12 public schools. For example, The LaBranche Wetland Watchers service-learning program involves a

core group of 175 seventh-grade students in a variety of service activities to improve their local habitat and community. Students use the knowledge they gain from the service-learning program to host service trips for nearly 1,200 fifth and sixth graders. Students also coordinate three weekend conservation events that involve community volunteers.

Over the past 11 years, students, teachers, partners, and adult volunteers have:

- ☐ Provided over 80,000 hours of volunteer services to the wetlands
- ☐ Planted over 3,000 trees
- ☐ Collected over 2,300 bags of trash and truckloads of junk
- ☐ Performed countless numbers of water tests in all parameters
- ☐ Involved over 11,000 fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students in wetland awareness programs

Service-learning is a teaching methodology that links academics with community service. Classroom instruction is reinforced through experiential education projects conducted by students that fulfill community needs. The real-life application of learning answers every student's question: "Why do I have to learn this?"

Ann Duplessis, Chair of the Louisiana Serve Commission, added, "I encourage educators and non-profits across the state to take advantage of this grant funding. Service learning programs are a win-win, delivering real results for students and the community."

Students benefit from service-learning programs by increasing their academic knowledge, develop teamwork and leadership skills, grow personally and socially, and increase their awareness of societal issues. Teachers meet the required state standards, benchmarks, and grade level expectations (GLEs) utilizing service-learning. Communities benefit from the service projects that are conducted by students.

Eligible applicants for this grant are K-12 public school teachers, schools, or school districts. New eligible applicants for 2009-10 are public or private non-profit organizations that have been in existence for over one year, have experience in working with at-risk youth, and can provide projects for the student participants. The program requires grantees to provide a 1:1 match, either through cash or in-kind contributions.

The Learn and Serve grant application is available at www.crt.state.la.us/laserve/las. The deadline for submission is April 15, 2009.